



MONTANA FISH, WILDLIFE & PARKS

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ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT CHECKLIST

PART I. PURPOSE OF AND NEED FOR ACTION

1. Project Title: Butte Trap and Skeet Club Proposed Improvement

2. Type of Proposed Action:

The Butte Trap and Skeet Club (BTSC) proposes to improve the trap and skeet range by:

- Replacing old, deteriorating trap fields with new handicap accessible shooting fields on two of the seven trap houses, including new wider and handicap accessible sidewalks.
- Installing seven live bird emulating helical machines.



Figure 1. Location of the Butte Trap and Skeet Club Range



Figure 2. Location of Proposed Project at the Butte Trap and Skeet Club Range

3. Location Affected by Proposed Action:

The BTSC Range is located approximately 3 miles south of Butte, Montana, on the corner of Basin Creek Road and Gun Club Road; Lat. 45.933303, Long. -112. 50530; on the SW1/4 of Section 8, Township 2 North, Range 7 West.

4. Agency Authority for the Proposed Action: MCA 87-1-276 through 87-1-279 (Legislative established policies and procedures for the establishment and improvement of shooting ranges) and MCA 87-2-105 (Departmental authority to expend funds to provide training in the safe handling and use of firearms and safe hunting practices). The Montana Legislature has authorized funding for the establishment of a Shooting Range Development Program providing financial assistance for the development of shooting ranges. Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks (FWP) has responsibility for the administration of the program, including the necessary guidelines and procedures governing applications for funding assistance under the program.

To be eligible for grant assistance, a private shooting club or a private organization:

- (a)(i) *Shall accept in its membership any person who holds or is eligible to hold a Montana hunting license and who pays club or organization membership fees;*
- (ii) *May not limit the number of members;*
- (iii) *May charge a membership fee not greater than the per-member share of the club's or organization's reasonable cost of provision of services, including establishment, improvement, and maintenance of shooting facilities and other membership services; and*

- (iv) Shall offer members occasional guest privileges at no cost to the member or invited guest and shall make a reasonable effort to hold a public sight-in day each September, when the general public may use the shooting range for a day-use fee or at no cost; or
- (b) Shall admit the general public for a reasonable day-use fee.

5. Need for the Action(s):

Currently, only four of the seven trap fields are handicap accessible. The surfaces of the remaining three trap fields are also breaking up and deteriorating in certain sections making them somewhat unstable and unsafe. Replacing two of the old trap fields with handicap-accessible shooting fields and widening the sidewalks will enhance the shooting experience for all shooters, including handicap shooters. Currently, only trap and wobble trap shooting are available. The addition of another shooting discipline by installing seven live bird emulating helical machines would allow the club to host bird shoots and provide other opportunities to businesses that use the facility for conventions or other activities. The addition of another discipline could also be utilized by the youth shooting programs that are held at the club.

6. Objectives for the Action(s):

The objective of the BTSC proposed project is to improve the trap and skeet range by creating handicap-accessible trap fields and installing seven live bird emulating helical machines. The helical machines would expand shooting opportunities by holding bird shoots for the public and businesses.

7. Project Size: estimate the number of acres that would be directly affected:

The proposed project would involve less than 1 acre of the 39-acre BTSC range.

8. Affected Environment (A brief description of the affected area of the proposed project):

The BTSC range is located on 39 acres of private land owned in fee title by the Butte Trap and Skeet Club. The range is not located within a floodplain and there are no permanent surface waters or wetlands on the property. The BTSC range offers shooting opportunities for shotgun.

9. Description of Project:

The BTSC proposed project involves: replacing old trap fields with handicap-accessible fields and installing seven live bird emulating helical machines. The estimated budget includes:

Contracted Labor	\$ 19,704
Miscellaneous Materials	\$ 400
Equipment (7 Helical Machines)	\$ 12,000
Equipment Rental	\$ 5,026
Concrete- Labor and Materials	\$ 6,864
Excavation	\$ 1,500
Gravel- Labor and Materials- Road Mix and Blue Rock	\$ 2,500
Lumber Package	\$ 1,061
Equipment Fuel Costs	\$ 400
Grant Administration	\$ 796
Total Project Budget	\$ 50,251
Total Funding Requested from FWP	\$ 25,126

10. List any Other Local, State, or Federal Agency that has Overlapping or Additional Jurisdiction:

None

Permits, Licenses and/or Authorizations:

<u>Agency Name</u>	<u>Permit</u>	<u>Date Filed/#</u>
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N/A

Funding:

<u>Agency Name</u>	<u>Funding Amount</u>
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Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks	\$25,126
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11. Affiliations, Cooperating Agencies, User Groups and/or Supporting Groups:

The BTSC range is located on 39 acres of private land deeded to the BTSC. This is a non-profit, private shooting club with no annual membership fee for individuals, \$25 for families and no day use fee for guests and members. The BTSC range hosts over six events each year. Approximately three organizations utilize the range, including: 4H, Boy Scouts, Youth Shooting Association, Montana Mining Convention and other interested organizations.

12. History of the Planning and Scoping Process, and Any Public Involvement:

Because the BTSC is a non-profit, private shooting club for members, there has been no public involvement in the planning process. Proposed range development proposals have been discussed with the club members and the associated project vendors and contractors.

13. List of Agencies Consulted/Contacted During Preparation of the EA:

Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks

14. Names, Address, and Phone Number of Project Sponsor:

Timothy Cassidy, 4 Bittersweet Drive, Butte, MT 59701. (406) 723-5082.

15. Other Pertinent Information:

The BTSC is a non-profit, private shooting club. The closest shooting range providing similar shooting opportunities is located approximately 23 miles from the BTSC range in Opportunity, Montana.

Shooting range applications require the participating governing body to approve by resolution its submission of applications for shooting range-funding assistance. Resolution Date: January 31, 2020.

PART II. IDENTIFICATION OF THE PREFERRED ALTERNATIVES

Alternative A, the **Proposed Alternative**, and **Alternative B**, the **No Action Alternative**, were considered.

Alternative A (Proposed Alternative) is as described in Part I, paragraph 9 (Description of Project), to improve the BTSC range by replacing two trap fields with handicap-accessible trap fields and installing seven live bird emulating helical machines. There are beneficial consequences to acceptance of the **Proposed Alternative**.

Alternative B (No Action Alternative) Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks Shooting Range Development Grant money would be denied and the area will remain as an active shooting range without the proposed improvements. The no action alternative would have no significant negative environmental or potentially negative consequences. The range will continue on with present conditions. Land use would remain the same.

Description and analysis of reasonable alternatives (including the no action alternative) to the proposed action whenever alternatives are reasonably available and prudent to consider and a discussion of how the alternatives would be implemented: Only the proposed alternative and the no action alternative were considered. There were no other alternatives that were deemed reasonably available, nor prudent. Neither the proposed alternative nor the no action alternative would have significant negative environmental or potentially negative consequences.

Describe any Alternatives considered and eliminated from Detailed Study:

None. Only the proposed alternative and the no action alternative were considered. There was no other alternative that were deemed reasonably available, or prudent. Neither the **Proposed Alternative** nor the **No Action Alternative** would have significant negative environmental or potentially negative consequences.

List and explain proposed mitigating measures (stipulations): None

PART III. ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

Abbreviated Checklist – The degree and intensity determine the extent of Environmental Review. An abbreviated checklist may be used for those projects that are not complex, controversial, or are not in environmentally sensitive areas.

Table 1. Potential impact on physical environment.

Will the proposed action result in potential impacts to:	Unknown	Potentially Significant	Minor	None	Can Be Mitigated	Comments Below
1. Unique, endangered, fragile, or limited environmental resources				X		
2. Terrestrial or aquatic life and/or habitats				X		2
3. Introduction of new species into an area				X		
4. Vegetation cover, quantity & quality				X		4
5. Water quality, quantity & distribution (surface or groundwater)				X		5
6. Existing water right or reservation				X		
7. Geology & soil quality, stability & moisture				X		7
8. Air quality or objectionable odors				X		
9. Historical & archaeological sites				X		9
10. Demands on environmental resources of land, water, air & energy				X		

Will the proposed action result in potential impacts to:	Unknown	Potentially Significant	Minor	None	Can Be Mitigated	Comments Below
11. Aesthetics				X		11

2. & 5. . There are no delineated wetlands and no natural water sources within the area proposed for development. No critical wildlife habitat would be affected. Any resident or transient wildlife may temporarily leave the immediate area during construction activities.

4. The elimination of vegetation for the implementation of the proposed project will not change the overall abundance and diversity of plant species within the area. The proposed project occupies a small portion of the property. Due to prior land use, native vegetation has been disturbed in the area of the proposed project. Therefore, the proposed project will have a minor impact on native vegetation in the area.

7. The proposed project will cause limited displacement of soils but the developments will not substantially affect geological features or establish new erosion patterns. Soil disruption for this site is localized. Erosion control measures will be in effect and disturbed area will be reseeded.

9. This project uses no federal funds nor does it take place on state owned or controlled property; therefore, the Federal 106 Regulations and the State Antiques Act do not apply.

11. The property is already used as a shooting range so the proposed project will have no additional impact on the aesthetics of the property.

Table 2. Potential impacts on human environment.

Will the proposed action result in potential impacts to:	Unknown	Potentially Significant	Minor	None	Can Be Mitigated	Comments Below
1. Social structures and cultural diversity				X		
2. Changes in existing public benefits provided by wildlife populations and/or habitat				X		
3. Local and state tax base and tax revenue				X		
4. Agricultural production				X		4
5. Human health				X		5
6. Quantity & distribution of community & personal income				X		

7. Access to & quality of recreational activities				X		7
8. Locally adopted environmental plans & goals (ordinances)				X		
9. Distribution & density of population and housing				X		
10. Demands for government services				X		
11. Industrial and/or commercial activity				X		

4. Even though the BTSC range is adjacent to agricultural land used for grazing and hay production, the range is not in agricultural production. The proposed project will have no affect on agricultural production.

5. The proposed project will improve the safety of the BTSC range and the surrounding residential community.

7. The proposed developments will increase shooting opportunities within the community.

PART IV. NARRATIVE EVALUATION AND COMMENT

All of the pertinent or potential impacts of the project have been reviewed, discussed, and analyzed. None of the projects reviewed were complex, controversial, or located in an environmentally sensitive area. The projects being implemented are already on an existing range or altered areas that together with the insignificant environmental effects of the proposed action, indicates that this should be considered the final version of the environmental assessment. There are no significant environmental or economic impacts associated with the proposed alternative.

The Butte Trap and Skeet Club's Proposed Alternative, to improve the handicap accessibility and installing seven live bird emulating helical machines, is supported by its members and the public. Therefore, Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks should approve the Proposed Alternative (A) for the improvements as outlined in Part I, Paragraph 9.

PART V. ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES

Does the proposed action involve potential risks or adverse effects, which are uncertain but extremely harmful if they were to occur? No

Does the proposed action have impacts that are individually minor, but cumulatively significant or potentially significant? Individually, the proposed actions have minor impacts. However, it was determined that there are no significant or potentially significant cumulatively impacts. Cumulative impacts have been assessed considering any incremental impact of the proposed action when they are combined with other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions, and no significant impacts or substantially

controversial issues were found. There are no extreme hazards created with this project and there are no conflicts with the substantive requirements of any local, state, or federal law, regulation, standard or formal plan.

Recommendation and justification concerning preparation of EIS:

There are no significant environmental or economic impacts associated with the proposed alternative; therefore, an EIS is not required.

PART VI. EA CONCLUSION SECTION

Individuals or groups contributing to, or commenting on, this EA:

- Timothy Cassidy, 4 Bittersweet Drive, Butte, MT 59701. (406) 723-5082.
- MT Fish Wildlife and Parks

EA prepared by:

Andrea Darling, Darling Natural Resource Consulting, Montana City, MT 59634

Date Completed:

April 17, 2020

Describe public involvement, if any:

This draft EA will be advertised on FWP's web site and through a legal ad in the *Montana Standard, Butte, MT* announcing a public comment period. A press release will also announce the project and comment period.